

Belief in the Concept of God's Oneness: Significance & Significant Spread through Tasawwuf

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Abstract

This article explores the significance and implications of the belief in the concept of God's Oneness. God Almighty is the source of all existence and Ultimate Reality of this universe. He is the Creator of the whole universe. The belief in the concept of one Creator teaches the lesson of love for all His human-beings and world-fellowship. The remedy for the Muslims' all woes and sufferings lies in this belief. This belief is the beacon of light and truth for discarding all types of superstitions. The Muslims should be realized about the high significance of this concept for the restoration of peace, prestige and integrity in the present circumstances. In the

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Indo-Pak, Saints/ Sufis/ Aulias/ Arifeen have ever remained strong spokesmen of the concept of God's Unity. The way they taught this lesson to the humanity was very absorbing, assimilating and impressing. It has been found through literature survey that there lie vast prospects of disseminating the God's Unity through promoting and propagating tawassuf (Sufiistics works and literature) in the present era of cultural pluralism.

Significance of Belief in God's Oneness:

Allama Muhammad Iqbal writes in his poem لا إله إلا الله

نکتہ گویم از مردان حال امتاں را جلال الاجمال
تائید نہ رہا اے آید بدست بدغیر اللہ ران تو ان شکست

From lives of men of state a point I trace:

“La” gives to nations glory, “illa” grace.

The secret of ‘La’ until we fully grasp.

We can’t of anti-God break bondage clasp.

در جهان آغاز کار از حرف لاست ایں ختنیں منزل مرد خداست

From ‘La’ does everything in the world proceed.

For man of God ‘tis foremost stage indeed. Din,
1998: 24-25)

Pakistan had came into being in the name of this Ultimate Reality's concept. It has been well said:

پاکستان کا مطلب کیا
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

(Shah, 2002, Oct: 38)

According to Iqbal (as cited in Shah, 2002, Oct), the secret of self-being is built around the concept of this Ultimate Reality i.e.

”خودی کا سر نہ اس لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ“ (ص ۳۸)

Sayyed Ali Hujweri (as cited in Malik, 1997: 100) has quoted a Hadith in the Kashaf-ul-Mehjoob:

مَنْ عَلِمَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى رَبُّهُ وَأَنَّنِي نَبِيُّهُ، حَرَمَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى لِحَمْدِهِ وَذَمَّهُ عَلَى النَّارِ
(ابْجَمُ الْكَبِيرِ: ۱۸/۱۲۳)، (جُمُعُ الرَّوَايَاتِ: ۱۹/۱)

Allah Almighty declared fire of hell *Haram* (forbidden) upon the flesh and blood of that person whosoever had firm faith that Allah Almighty is his/her Rubb (Sustainer) and that I (Hazrat Muhammad Sallallah-o-Alaih-i-Wasallum) am his/her truthful Prophet.

It implies that firm belief in the sustaining Authority of Allah Almighty and truthful Prophethood of Hazrat Muhammad Sallallah-o-Alaih-i-Wasallum is of so great

value that its believers have been given assurity of liberation from the torment of hell.

According to Sarawak (2004), one can assent that monotheism taught by the last Prophet reached its perfection. The teaching of the Prophet (Sallallah-o-Alaih-i-Wasallum) is as fresh and alive today as it was at the beginning of the Hegira and therefore appears in the sense, to the latest manifestation of Divine will, to spread all over the world the knowledge and belief in one God.

Firm belief in the concept of One God i.e. the Ultimate Reality of this universe has been declared the greatest remedy for the Muslims' maladies.

In the 'Mysteries of Selflessness' Allama Iqbal says (as cited in the Da'wah Highlights, 2004: 18) that one night he saw Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq in a dream.

Seeing the great patriarch, Iqbal said: "Respected Sir, you set new standards of love; you established the fabric of our Commonwealth on a firm basis; Please prescribe some remedy for the woes that plague us."

Thereupon Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq said:

"Get guidance from Surah Ikhlas in the Holy Qur'an. The remedy for all your maladies lies in holding fast to the doctrine of the Unity of God; God wanted all the Muslims

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to be one Millat but you have created divisions among you, and labeled yourselves as Afghans, Iranians, Turks and so on. By such divisions you have undermined your own strength. You are like the fruit that has fallen unripe from the tree. The remedy of your woes is that you should discard these divisions. The Muslims should be integrated into one community, and should thus be a manifestation of the Unity of God.

Implications of Belief in the Oneness of God:

'Belief in the Concept of One God/One Reality/ One Creator Teaches the Human-Beings Love for their Fellow-Beings

Siddiqui (2004, February) quotes:

If a people follows the teachings of any such religion which teaches that there is a reality and a Creator behind the whole universe, they will come to love that Supreme Being, his Creator just as the creator loves His best creation – the Human being. They will then also learn to love their fellow beings for one who loves the Creator will surely and undoubtedly love His creation. It is evident that anyone who has friendship and love for another will have regard and affection also for that man's offsprings and will never try to injure their feelings. (p. 27)

Qureshi (2002, Oct: 27) notes down that those who believe in the Divine revelation اَنْ يُبَشِّرُكُمْ بِاللَّهِ وَاحِدٍ are realized about the sameness of their origin i.e., اَنْ يُبَشِّرُكُمْ وَاحِدٍ. The belief in اَنْ يُبَشِّرُكُمْ وَاحِدٍ strengthens the concept of the unity of whole human race.

Belief in the Concept of One Reality/ One Creator teaches the Equality of Mankind and World Fellowship

Siddiqui (2004, February) states:

Religion – if the word is applied to those schools of thought which speak of a Reality, a Divine Being behind the whole universe – can on no account countenance any division in the human race for the fundamental teaching of such religions being the belief in one Reality, one Creator they cannot teach men to believe that there is any difference between the members of His best creation – the human beings. (p. 26)

Siddiqui explores that no doubt some honour is due to those who devote themselves to that Reality but that will be His work and not of others. And He will know best who deserves the honour and who does not. As a created being all stand upon one and the same platform.

All religions of the world have not ever taught anything against the equality of mankind. The greatest

¹ -Al-Baqarah: 113

Prophet of Islam, Hazrat Muhammad has declared under Divine Revelation:

وَكَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَا أَنَّ النَّفْسَ بِالنَّفْسِ وَالْعَيْنَ بِالْعَيْنِ وَالْأَنفَ بِالْأَنفِ
وَالْأَذْنَ بِالْأَذْنِ وَالسَّنَنَ بِالسَّنَنِ وَالْحُرُوجَ قَصَاصٌ فَمَنْ تَصَدَّقَ بِهِ فَهُوَ
كَفَارَةً لَهُ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

(45)¹

"We ordained therein for them life for life, eye for eye, nose for nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth and wounds equal for that. But one forgives, his reward is with Allah the Creator."

Maudoodi (2000, July) explains, "comparatively similar instructions can be seen from Taurat's Kitab-e-Kharooj, Chap. 21, verses 23 – 25 (Eng. Trans)". (p. 474)

It supplements the fact that no religion has ever taught anything against the equality of mankind. It is high time especially for the torch bearers of the various religions of the world to unite together, be faithful to their religion in its right sense and cooperate with all others in their common object which is to fulfil the spiritual and material requirements of humanity to foster a true world fellowship.

¹- Surah Al-Maidah: 45

Role of Tasawwuf in the Dissemination of Belief in God's Oneness:

Aulias (Sufis)' lives are wrought with the concept of Reality. There lies great desirability and necessity for benefiting from the company of the Sufis/Aulias. Qureshi (2002, Oct: 27) writes that if we look at the lives of Sufis/Saints, we seek the reflection that their hearts are free from the thought of other than God. The only objective of their lives is to attain the Will and Pleasure of their Creator. Qureshi quotes from Hazrat Shams Tubrezi in this context thereby:

(p.27) "ھو اول ھو آخر ھو الظاہر ھو الباطن"

"بَغْرِيْ بِھُو وَكَرْ چِرْ بَنْجِيْ دَانْم"

[Only He (the Almighty Allah) is the First and Foremost. Only He is to Last for ever. He is the Apparent (everywhere). He is the Hidden, (too). Except His Supreme Being (Except Him i.e. the Almighty Allah, the Almighty Allah, the Almighty Allah), I know nothing else].

Allama Muhammad Iqbal has paid a great tribute to Sayyed Ali Hujweri as a spokesman of truth and promoter of the concept of reality. Shah (2002, Oct) has well noted down Iqbal's tribute to Sayyed Ali Hujweri as mentioned in one of Iqbal's great works "Asrar-e-Khudi":

"سید ہجیر مخدوم ام
مرقد اوریں سخراحم
بندھائے کوہ سار آسان گستاخ
در زمین ہند تھم سجدہ ریخت
عہد فاروق از جماش تازہ شد
حق زحرف او بلند آوازہ شد
پاسبان عزت ام الکتاب
از زگاہش خانہ باطل خراب"

(pp. 30-31)

(Sayyed-e-Hujveir (Sayyed Ali Hujweri) is the guide for the nations. His grave was deemed like Harm (Ka'ba) by Hazrat Khawaja Mui'n-ud-Din Chishti Ajmeri (Rehmat-Ullah Alaih). He softened the stiffness of the mountains. He sowed the seed of prostration (Allah's worship) in the Indian soil. His glory revived the era of Hazrat Umar Farooq (May Allah be Pleased with him). The voice of truth rose high up by his words. He lived as a guard of the grandeur of the Holy Quran. His looks wiped out the centre of falsehood and infidelity.]

According to Yameen (2004, February 29), Sultan Bahoo widely spread the concept of the Reality in his famous Punjabi verses:

اللہ اللہ، چیز دی بوئی، مرشد من و حج لائی ھو
نئی اثبات دا پانی ملیا، ہر ہر رگ، ہر جائی ھو

Azhar (2003, December) has quoted in this context Baba Farid's Verse:

”جنگل جنگل کیا بھویں، ون کنڈ اموڑیں
وہی رب حیا لیے، جنگل کیا ڈھونڈیں!“

(p. 32)

Azhar has translated the same into English, thus:

“Why are you wandering in the jungles and walking on the thorny grasses, while seeking your Creator? Do not you know that He is in your heart? (We are nearer to him than his life-vein!)” (p. 33)

Sami'-Ullah (2005) notes that Khawaja Farid entitled as ‘Shams-ul-Arifeen’ propagated the message of Allah Almighty’s Oneness very effectively through his verse. Khawaja Farid revealed:

”ھک ہے ھک ہے ھک ہے“
”ھک دی دم دم سک ہے“

God Almighty is One. God Almighty is One. In every moment, in every breath, we are extremely desirous of seeking His supreme blessings!

"حکم ہے ظاہر حکم ہے باطن
یا سب کچھ حاکم ہے"

He is the only One. He is Hidden. He is Apparent.
Except His Supreme Being, everything else is mortal and
perishable.

"جیز حاکم کوں ڈول کر جانے
او کافر مشک ہے"

Whosoever associates anybody with God Almighty
or may indulge in duality of God is Kafir/ Mushrik (Non-
believer/Infidel).

"یار کوں رہ مجبور
چھنڈ ڈے یو مجبور"

Prostrate before Allah Almighty only. Give up
prostration before any other god.

Role of Language in the Spread of Reality's Concept

Rich (1992) aptly puts a self-replied question:

"Does language shape people's views of reality, or
do people's views of reality determine the language
structure? Perhaps what occurs is that language
develops to help people to deal with their experiences.
Once a particular language has evolved, it influences the
world view of the speech community". (p. 313)

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Rich's analysis reveals that language plays a great role in shaping people's views of reality. Majorly, sufiistic works are in oriental languages i.e. Arabic, Persian, Punjabi, Urdu, etc. The promotion of these languages will be desirably helpful for the shaping of peoples views about reality. Otherwise, it is also the need of hour that much more sufiistic works should be rendered into English version for propagating these views in the global scenario.

According to Zia (2001, December 2: 22), eighty percent web-pages are available only in English at this time. Moreover, seventy-five percent European children are learning English in their schools. So, English is the most effective vehicle for promoting the concept of Ultimate Reality and the unity of whole humans' race across the world.

Sufiistic works are not popular only in the Islamic countries but their demand in the English countries is also verified. Lampman (2001) gives its reflection, thus, that the best selling poet in the US is none other than the famous Sufi Jalal-ud-Din Rumi.

Dar (2002) endorses:

"It is also worthmentioning that while materialism, consumerism and culture of instant gratification is rampant, there is also an increased interest in the spirituality and mysticism not only in our part of the world but also in what we refer to as "the west". Friends and relatives, in

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different parts of the world testify to this phenomenon and one is often confronted with requests regarding material on mystic saints of the past and on sufiism in general." (p. 19)

It has been reiterated that among the objectives of English language teaching in our schools, colleges and universities, "English for the Transmission of Islamic Culture (ETIC)" should also be included as an important objective of compulsory English curriculum at secondary, higher secondary, graduation and post-graduation level (Jundran (a), 2003: 84); (Jundran (b), 2003: 72-75).

Sufiistic works are rich resources of Islamic culture. So their propagation in English language can prove an effective tool for spreading Islamic belief in God's Unity and Islamic culture across the globe.

Recommendations

Owing to the high importance of belief in God's Oneness for sound personality development it is recommended hereby that:

1. Belief in the concept of God's Oneness should be made a compulsory part of the national core curriculum at all levels i.e. primary to higher level.
2. A detailed account of the hectic efforts and sacrifices of the pious and spiritual personalities of the world

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who successfully wiped out and eradicated Kufr and Shirk from different parts of the world may be included in the social sciences subjects curricula. This familiarity with the achievements of aforesaid personalities will inspire the young generation for following and disseminating the lesson of God's Oneness more effectively and perpetually.

3. God Almighty is immortal and invisible. His Supreme being is immaterial and intangible. Parents should train their children about this abstract belief through the natural phenomena. Moreover, parents should provide their children the company of such pious, religious and spiritual personalities of the society whose lives and actions solely are exemplary for learning and following this lesson of God's Oneness. So that children may keep themselves on the right track (Sirat-e-Mustaqeem) through such noble company.

In view of the central significance of the Sufi scholars/Saints/Aulias' teachings for the dissemination of the concept of God's Oneness, it is desirably need of the hour that:

- i. The Auqaf Ministry should formulate the appropriate, effective and comprehensive strategy for the dissemination of these sufiistic personalities' concepts and ideas which are replete with the belief in God's Oneness.

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- ii. The primary objective of the Government of the Punjab, Auqaf Department should be the promotion and propagation of such saints/Sufis/ Aulia's' luminous instructions.
- iii. These Mazars/sanctuaries should not be taken as mere "revenue collecting points" or "sources of worldly earnings" rather they should be treated, and benefited as knowledge – imparting springs, and spirit – enlightening fountains (*Rohani Tarbiyyati Marakez*).
- iv. At least, twenty percent share of mazars/sanctuaries income may be spent on the promotion, publication and circulation of their classical sufiistic works, on regular basis. Simplified and abridged versions of the Sufistic works wrought with up-to-date commentaries, notes, topic indices should be released in quality printing material, individually, according to the need of students, teachers, scholars and common masses. They should be made available to the libraries of educational institutions.

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